

Over \$11 million for research and development, conservation, and rural programs

Washington, D.C. Congressman Sanford Bishop today announced that the full House of Representatives approved the fiscal year (FY) 2008 Agriculture Appropriations bill. The bill includes more than \$11 million for research, conservation, housing, and rural programs throughout the 2nd Congressional District and Georgia. As a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Congressman Bishop helped craft the bill.

"This bill comprehensively ensures the continued strength of our agricultural sector while addressing the growing need for research and development into alternative fuels, land conservation, and innovative ways to feed our nation's most vulnerable," said Congressman Bishop. "I am also pleased the Committee chose to allocate funds to some critical research and development projects that specifically tackle the needs of Georgia agriculture."

Several projects within the bill will directly benefit projects in the Second Congressional District, including funding to prevent the onset of chronic diseases and the growing problem of overweight children, find alternative methods of controlling pecan scab disease, and enhance the long-term sustainability of irrigated agricultural production and net returns.

Overall, the FY 2008 bill refocuses funding on rural America. It provides significant increases to grant and loan programs for health care and educational facilities in rural areas, as well as distance learning and telemedicine grants. It also restores the broadband grant program to help rural areas with limited educational and medical resources and supports affordable housing loans for low and moderate-income families in rural areas.

Other areas of focus include the Food Safety and Inspection Service within the USDA, investing in nutrition programs such as Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). The bill also doubles funding for renewable energy loans and grants to businesses.

The Agriculture Appropriations bill for FY 2008 provides \$18.8 billion in discretionary spending for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and other related agencies, a \$1 billion increase over FY 2007 and \$987.4 million above the amount requested by the President.

The bill must be reconciled with its Senate version in a conference committee later this year.

For a full summary of the bill, please visit the Appropriations website:
<http://appropriations.house.gov/pdf/AgSummaryFC.pdf>.

Projects included in the Agricultural Appropriations bill:

- Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission, Athens, GA—Provide cost-share funds to farmers to construct/renovate agricultural reservoirs and improve irrigation efficiency.
\$3,600,000

- The Peanut Institute, Albany, GA—Ongoing research between the Children’s Nutrition Research Center, which is examining ways to prevent the onset of chronic diseases and the growing problem of overweight children. \$496,677
- National Peanut Research Lab, Dawson, GA —Agriculture water policy research. \$882,000
- Georgia Pecan Growers Association, Byron, GA—The development of better adapted pecan varieties and rootstocks, improved insect and nematode pest management strategies that enable control of pests while reducing introduction of pesticides into the environment, and development of strategies and technologies that overcome alternate bearing varieties. \$460,013
- Southeast Watershed Research Lab, Tifton, GA—Water resources research. \$586,215
- National Peanut Research Laboratory, Dawson, GA—Peanut Research, Dawson. \$131,799
- Georgia Pecan Growers Association, Byron, GA—Research for alternative methods of controlling pecan scab disease, a potentially devastating disease for pecan farmers. \$603,409
- National Peanut Research Lab, Dawson, GA—Peanut production research. \$74,250
- Southeast Watershed Research Lab, Tifton, GA—Water use management technology. \$340,828
- Georgia Environmental Training and Education Authority, Albany, GA —Provide rural wastewater training to local municipalities and local officials. \$346,500
- National Wild Turkey Federation —Operation Oak Program seeks the restoration of native hardwoods. \$396,000
- The University of Georgia, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences—Research for *Phytophthora capsici*, a disease affecting growers of Cucurbit crops (melons, squash and cucumbers) and Solanaceous crops (peppers and tomatoes). \$255,000
- The University of Georgia, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences—Cotton Insect Management and Fiber Quality Research. \$489,000
- The University of Georgia, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences—an integrated approach for the vegetable industry in Georgia to protect crops from *Phytophthora capsici*. \$253,000
- The University of Georgia, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences—Water Use Efficiency and water quality enhancements through advanced technologies. \$489,000
- The University of Georgia, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences—Initiative to improve blueberry production efficiency and fruit quality. \$300,000

- National Wild Turkey Federation—continued federal support to implement a strategic plan of outreach programs to benefit children, women, and disabled individuals by providing opportunities to learn or improve skills and to participate in outdoor recreational activities. \$232,000

- Avian Pneumovirus/Asian Bird Influenza, Athens, GA-- \$291,926

- Poultry Enteritis Mortality Syndrome, Athens, GA (PEMS),. \$145,903

- National Peanut Research Laboratory, Dawson, GA —Enhancing Long-Term Sustainability of Irrigated Agricultural Production and Net Returns. \$704,635

The bill directs the Rural Development Authority to give priority consideration to the following projects in FY 2008:

- Southwest Georgia Rural Disaster Demonstration Project: Baker, Webster, Randolph, Crawford, Mitchell, Worth, Taylor, Clay, Stewart, Sumter Macon Counties.

- Zion Hope Outreach Ministries, Inc.—To increase home ownership among underprivileged families in Sumter County, GA.

- Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission—Provide for breach studies, inundation maps, and emergency action plan on high hazard dams in Georgia.

- The Unified Government of Cusseta-Chattahoochee County, GA—In need of a well and water tank to provide service to existing customers expanding water needs and new customers